

# Sunday trade closer for bottle shops

USMAN AZAD

ALL liquor stores across the South West would be allowed to trade on Sundays if the Government agrees with the recommendation from an independent review of the Liquor Control Act.

The review committee, headed by Ian Atkins, has spent a year reviewing the legislation which governs alcohol trade and regulation in Western Australia.

On Tuesday, the committee handed down its 270-page report with 141 recommendations.

All metropolitan liquor stores have traded from 10am-10pm on Sundays – but State Parliament did not extend this right to the regions because of fears it would impact on hotels.

In the report, the review committee calls on this restriction on regional liquor stores to be lifted.

The committee noted that although country hotels were an in-

tegral part of rural life, continuing a distinction between metropolitan and regional traders could not be justified.

The committee says the owners of licensed premises must assess the existing and potential business risks and must adapt to change, like any other industry.

However, Eaton Tavern manager Brad Williams has opposed the change.

Mr Williams said Sundays were the tavern's busiest trading day because most other stores were closed.

Cellarbrations at Eaton manager, Ali Johnson, said their liquor store was a small, family-run business.

"We don't particularly want to open on Sundays," she said. "But if the other stores do then we would too. Personally, I think we should leave Sunday trading to the taverns."

The report makes a number of

wide-ranging recommendations including keeping the legal drinking age at 18, banning secondary supply of alcohol to children and banning alcohol advertising to children.

The State branch of the Australian Hotels Association has declared the liquor review was "dominated" by the public health lobby and Western Australian Police.

Australian Medical Association WA president Dr Richard Choong agrees with many of the recommendations which aim to reduce alcohol harm.

Racing and Gaming Minister Terry Waldron said he would arrange meetings with key stakeholders before discussing the findings with State Cabinet.

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